

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 12, 13, 23, 24, and 34 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 12, 13, 23, 24, and 34 have been amended to more particularly define the circumstances for the use of the two individual interpolations and a blend of interpolations. Support for these amendments appears in the paragraph bridging specification pages 43-44, considered with pages 40, lines 8-17, and page 47, line 4-page 48, line 19, as well as the flow chart of Fig. 7. Accordingly, it is clear that no new matter has been included.

The outstanding Office Action includes a rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 12, 14, 15, 18, 23, 25, 26, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakaida (U. S. Patent No. 6,392,765) in view of Westerink et al. (U. S. Patent No. 5,420,971, Westerink) rejection of Claims 2, 6, 13, 17, 24, 28, and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakaida in view of Westerink in further view of Sekine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,754,710, Sekine), a rejection of Claims 5, 16, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakaida in view of Westerink in further view of Dube et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,782,143, Dube), and a rejection of Claims 8-11, 19-22, and 30-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakaida in view of Westerink in further view of Kuwata (U. S. Patent No. 6,768,559).

The invention of independent Claims 1, 12, and 23, includes a safeguard against executing interpolation processing that is unsuitable for a particular type of image as noted at page 6, lines 16-22, for example. Thus, each of base independent Claims 1, 12, and 23 explicitly recite the determination of the type of image, natural or non-natural, if possible and an interpolation processing based on this determination. Blending the two different interpolation processes only occurs if the natural or non-natural determination is not clear.

Turning to the rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 12, 14, 15, 18, 23, 25, 26, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakaida in view of Westerink, it is noted that the cancellation of Claims 3, 4, 7, 14, 15, 18, 25, 26, and 29 on this grounds moot.

With regard to independent Claims 1, 12, and 23, it is noted that neither Sakaida nor Westerink teach the subject matter added to these claims in terms of determining if the image is a non-natural image or a natural image, or that it cannot be determined whether the image is either a natural image nor a non-natural image, based on brightness data of the acquired image data. Nor do they teach or suggest that if it is determined that the image is a non-natural image, a first interpolation processing is used while a second interpolation image processing is used if it is determined that the image is a natural image, and that a blend of these two interpolation processes is only used when the natural or non-natural characteristic cannot be determined.

To whatever extent that Westerink suggests a relationship between image sharpness and the likelihood of it being a natural image, the use of sharpness to determine if an image is natural is not what is claimed. Thus, even if the artisan were to use sharpness to determine that an image is a natural image, this does not teach all the subject matter of these claims and this rejection of Claims 1, 12, and 23 is traversed.

As Claims 5, 6, 8-11, 16, 17, 19-22, 27, 28, and 30-33 have been canceled, the rejections applied to these claims are believed to be moot.

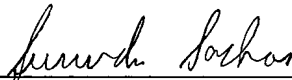
As none of the other references (Sekine, Dube, and/or Kuwata) considered alone or together in any proper combination cure the above noted deficiencies of Sakaida and Westerink, the rejections applied to dependent Claims 2, 13, 24, and 34, that all ultimately depend on one of the base independent Claims 1, 12, and 23, are also traversed.

.. Application No. 09/840,075
Reply to Office Action of 12/08/2005

As no further issues are believed to remain outstanding in the present application, it is believed that this application is clearly in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000

Fax: (703) 413 -2220

(OSMMN 06/04)

Gregory J. Maier

Attorney of Record

Registration No. 25,599

Raymond F. Cardillo, Jr.

Registration No. 40.440

Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423

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